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CARDIN CALLS RATIFICATION OF CEDAW LONG- OVERDUE, URGES SENATE ACTION

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, released the following statement in support of U.S. ratification of the ***Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*** (CEDAW). His remarks came following a hearing of the Human Rights and the Law Subcommittee, of which Senator Cardin is a member.

“The U.S. has always been a committed and active leader on human rights. Our nation has ratified treaties against genocide and torture, and others that uphold fundamental civil and political rights. Despite this track record, we have failed for 30 years to ratify the only comprehensive international human rights treaty concerned solely with the rights of women. With 186 of 193 countries having already ratified the treaty, we are the only industrialized democracy who has not done so. It is time for us to stop holding international governments to a higher standard and provide all women with the protections they need and deserve.

“For many women around the world, severe gender inequality is deeply enshrined in law, whether it's the lack of protection from violence, or the lack of secure property rights. In the US, we have made great strides in advancing women's human rights and many of our domestic laws are in accord with CEDAW, but there is much more progress to be made. Each day, American women still are confronted by fundamental problems such as pay discrimination, threats to their economic security, inadequate maternal health care, human trafficking and violence. At a time when women make up half of the total U.S. workforce and nearly 4 in 10 American mothers are the primary breadwinners of their household, we should be actively helping to protect women from violence and discrimination and not just standing on the sidelines.

“On behalf of all of the women in the U.S. and around the world, as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, I am fully committed to the ratification of CEDAW and urge my colleagues to allow a long-overdue vote on this treaty.”

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